

CLAIMS:

1. A method for commanding operations on a controlled computer via a controlling computer in a collaborative computing environment, the method comprising the steps of:

5 generating a screen display at a controlled computer based upon a program run by the controlled computer;

transmitting data representative of the screen display to a controlling computer;

10 transmitting input event data representative of an input event from the controlling computer to the controlled computer;

identifying a logical block of the screen display affected by the input event at the controlled computer based upon the program and the input event data;

transmitting data corresponding to the logical block from the controlled computer to the controlling computer; and

15 caching display data for at least the logical block at the controlling computer.

2. The method of claim 1, comprising the step of caching at least the data corresponding to the logical block at the controlled computer.

20 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the data corresponding to the logical block includes data representative of coordinates of a perimeter of the logical block.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the program is resident at and is run on the controlled computer.

25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the input event includes a signal generated on an operator input device.

30 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the operator input device includes a computer mouse.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the input event data includes a screen location of an operator selected input.

5 8. The method of claim 1, comprising the step of executing an instruction via the controlled computer based upon the input event.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the logical block includes a display window.

10 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the logical block includes a graphical command device.

11. A method for controlling operation of a controlled computer via a controlling computer in a collaborative environment, the method comprising the steps of:

displaying an interface screen at a controlled computer based upon a program run by the controlled computer;

transmitting screen data representative of the screen for display at a controlling computer coupled to the controlled computer via a network;

20 transmitting input event data from the controlling computer to the controlled computer via the network;

designating a portion of the screen at the controlled computer based upon the input event data and the program;

25 caching the portion of the screen at the controlling and controlled computers; and

executing a command based upon the input event data.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the input event data includes data identifying a location of a graphical element on the screen.

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13. The method of claim 12, wherein the portion of the screen is designated based upon functionality of the portion at the location as defined by the program.

5 14. The method of claim 11, wherein the portion of the screen is cached at the controlling computer by transmitting data indicative of limits of the portion from the controlled computer to the controlling computer, and capturing the portion of the screen within the limits.

10 15. The method of claim 11, comprising the step of transmitting from the controlled computer to the controlling computer background data representative of a portion of a screen beneath the portion.

15 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the command includes movement of the portion, and wherein the background data is referenced to fill a section of the screen from which the portion is moved.

20 17. The method of claim 11, wherein the portion includes a display window.

18. The method of claim 11, wherein the portion includes a graphical input device.

25 19. The method of claim 11, network includes the Internet.

20. A method for sharing control of a controlled computer via in a collaborative environment, the method comprising the steps of:

displaying an interface screen at a controlled computer based upon a program run by the controlled computer;

30 transmitting screen data representative of the screen for display at plurality of controlling computers coupled to the controlled computer via a network;

transmitting input event data from at least one of the controlling computers to the controlled computer via the network;

designating a portion of the screen at the controlled computer based upon the input event data and the program;

5 caching the portion of the screen at least at the controlling computers; and
 executing a command based upon the input event data.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the input event data includes data identifying a location of a graphical element on the screen.

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22. The method of claim 20, wherein the portion of the screen is cached at the controlling computers by transmitting data indicative of limits of the portion from the controlled computer to the controlling computers, and capturing the portion of the screen within the limits.

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23. The method of claim 20, comprising the step of transmitting from the controlled computer to the controlling computers background data representative of a portion of a screen beneath the portion.

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24. A collaborative computing system comprising:

a controlled computer configured to run a program and to display a user interface screen based upon the program;

a controlling computer linked to the controlled computer via a network, the controlling computer receiving screen data via the network for display of the interface screen;

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a cache memory coupled to the controlling computer and configured to cache portions of the interface screen identified by the controlled computer based upon input events occurring at the controlling computer and based upon the program.

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25. The system of claim 24, wherein the controlling computer includes an input device and data representative of input events made via the input device are transmitted to the controlled computer via the network to permit identification of the portions of the interface screen.

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26. The system of claim 24, wherein the controlled computer includes a cache memory and is configured to cache the portions of the interface screen.

27. The system of claim 24, wherein the program is resident at and runs on the controlled computer.

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28. The system of claim 24, wherein the controlled computer is coupled to a controlled device, and wherein instructions corresponding to the input events are executed on the controlled device.

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29. The system of claim 24, comprising a plurality of controlling computers linked to the controlled computer via the network, each controlling computer including a cache memory for storing the portions of the interface screen.

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